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HOOP DREAMS...

SURGING BISON SEEM FOR REAL IN NARROW LOSSES

— PAGE 8 —

PHOTO BY STAN MADDUX

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Vendor applications for downtown market accepted

BY STAN MADDUX

Vendors can now apply for the 2024 regular season of Farmed and Forged in LaPorte.

Formerly known as the LaPorte Farmers Market, Farmed & Forged debuted in downtown LaPorte last year.

It's a producers' only market dedicated to showcasing some of the best produce, craftsmanship, and culinary offerings in the area.

All raw food items are sourced within a 100-mile radius of LaPorte.

Local farmers, artisans, restaurants, breweries, and nonprofits interested in participating in the Farmed & Forged 2024 season are invited to submit a vendor application.

To apply and find more information, visit www.thecollectivein.com/fandf.

"We are thrilled to launch applications for the Farmed & Forged 2024 season. This market is a weekly celebration of local talent, community, inclusive food access, and giving back. We invite all prospective vendors to apply to join us in contributing to the success of this season," said Mandy Krickhahn, owner/founder/CEO of The Collective.

The Collective is a support group for entrepreneurs that operates similar markets in other communities in Northwest Indiana to provide opportunity for small growers and other businesses.

Farmed and Forged this year is scheduled every Sunday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 26 through Sept. 29 on Monroe Street between Lincolnway and Washington streets.

Admission is free.

Live music and other happenings are featured during market hours.

Krickhahn said federal food assistance benefits are also accepted on purchases of produce and other edibles at the market.

Film group to return with film version of August Wilson's 'Fences'

The Harbor Country Film Group will begin its 2024 meetings with a screening of "Fences," in celebration of Black History Month, at 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24, at the New Buffalo Township Library, located at 33 N. Thompson Street in downtown New Buffalo.

The film is based on August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize winning play about a proud garbage collector in 1950s Pittsburgh, a once a promising baseball player who was unable to advance on account of the color barrier.

Troy Maxson is a husband and father, who carries with him the frustration of his unrealized sports dreams. Tensions bubble in the family when, among other things, Maxson's bitterness thwarts his young son's opportunity for a college football scholarship.

The film stars Denzel Washington and Viola Davis, in an Oscar-winning performance. Film group leader Eve Moran will introduce 'Fences', screen the movie and lead a discussion afterwards.

Film group meetings are free and open to all. As usual, there will be free popcorn.

— STAFF REPORTS

Eventually ... you figure it out.
— Dino N. Fatouros

TOWN SQUARE

LETTERS TO THE *NEW BUFFALO TIMES*:

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ENJOY READING...

The Little Free Library in New Buffalo has moved....3 inches closer to Whittaker. Still on E. Merchant St., still across the street from the bank. This was made possible with the outstanding cooperation of Amy Fidler, New Buffalo City Clerk and Josh Bolton of the Streets Department. The Friends of the Library are grateful to them for understanding how important a little free library is to the city.

The Friends of the Library had a new, larger one built to replace the one that was showing wear from three years of Michigan weather.

We hope everyone will be using the new one. Remember, "Take Books, Share Books, Give Books".

Also, if you don't see a book you want, come into the library. Free hardcover books that the library is getting rid of to make room for new publications are available just inside the door. Newer books of all kinds, hardcover, soft cover, fiction, non-fiction, children's and special interest are inside to the left as you enter. We ask only for a donation for those. You don't have to have a library card for the free and donation books.

— KATE MELL, MEMBER,
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Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

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JOHN HUMPHREY, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJESKI, JOHN HUMPHREY, BRIAN FLANAGAN, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
PETE RAHM, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, JACK ROGERS
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, BRADLEY BURNER, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, BILL MARSKE
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM

VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday October thru March at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER BLAKE O'HALLORAN, JAMES BRACEWELL, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES

MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Train horns silenced in LaPorte

BY STAN MADDUX

The sound of train horns blaring every half hour has stopped in the City of LaPorte.

A long sought after quiet zone designation given final approval recently by the Federal Railroad Administration went into effect on Tuesday, Feb. 13.

La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership Executive Director Bert Cook said silencing the horns on one of the busiest rail lines in the nation running through the heart of the city has been one of the strategies pursued for making the downtown more user friendly.

He also believes the quality-of-life impact will be noticeable not just along the Norfolk Southern tracks but several blocks to the north and south of the line.

"So many homes, so many businesses are located in close proximity to the tracks, the quiet zone will be an amazing change for the positive," he said.

Work on achieving quiet zone designation by the city started more than a decade ago when two crossing arms on each side of the tracks were installed at several locations such as Tipton and Tyler streets, to improve safety.

Most recently, LaPorte Assistant City Planner David Heinold said yellow reflective posts or bollards were installed in the median leading up to crossings on Boston, Detroit, Madison and Pulaski streets.

The idea of the bollards is making sure drivers are aware they're approaching a crossing and provide a barrier designed to prevent them from veering around the gates at crossings still protected by a single crossing arm on each side.

Heinold said signs reminding drivers and pedestrians on sidewalks to look both ways before crossing the tracks were also installed to complete the final quiet zone requirements.

"We went through a process and then the Federal Railroad Administration came out and inspected it and made sure we had all of the required safety improvements in place," he said.

Heinold said trains will be allowed to blow their whistles in the event of a safety issue like an object or person spotted up ahead on the tracks.

He said the quiet zone designation will be reviewed by the Federal Railroad Administration every couple of years or if there's with a train occurs.

The designation from Orchard Avenue on the west side to Boston Street on the east side could be lifted or suspended until the city completes any additional safety upgrades that might be ordered.

"I think it's a good community aesthetic and something that other communities I know like," Heinold said.

Cook said one of the objectives is luring additional visitors by providing a more relaxing or calming experience downtown.

He described the horns as loud enough to pause conversations in places like restaurants with outdoor dining and disrupt hospital patients at Northwest Health, which is practically beside the rails.

Northwest Health was among the financial contributors to the safety improvements and other work necessary to obtain quiet zone status.

"Think about being a patient at the hospital where you're in recovery and you're trying to rest and you've got train horns going off 60 times a day. That's a big deal," Cook said.

Rich people only like being around rich people.
— Steve Wynn

ANOTHER MARIJUANA DISPENSARY RELATED ARREST IN INDIANA

An arrest has been made in LaPorte County for having a large quantity of marijuana purchased legally from a new dispensary just outside New Buffalo.

La Porte County Police said a sheriff's deputy was monitoring traffic on the night of Feb. 8 along Indiana 39 across from the Michigan state line when he noticed a southbound vehicle had a dim license plate light.

The light was not strong enough to allow the plate to be seen from a distance of at least 50 feet, which is against state law, police said.

Eventually, police said the officer caught up to the speeding vehicle, which was pulled over in a gas station parking lot at Indiana 39 and U.S. 20.

While speaking to the driver, police said the officer detected an odor of marijuana along with some type of air freshener or cologne.

Police said marijuana in leafy form and in gummies and wax were found in a white bag covered by a sweater in the back seat of the vehicle.

According to police, the marijuana products were purchased at URB, a recently opened dispensary along Michigan 239 and Interstate 94 in New Buffalo Township.

The purchase price was $564.

The driver, Richard Main, 40, of La Porte, was arrested for possession with intent to deliver marijuana and possession of marijuana, both misdemeanor offenses.

Main told the officer he purchased the products for his grown children and a friend to consume. He was being held in the La Porte County Jail on $605.

— STAN MADDUX

Chikaming Township Board talks township beaches

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

The beaches of Chikaming Township took center stage at the Thursday, Feb. 8, Chikaming Township Board of Trustees meeting.

Joe Martin, director of parks and recreation at Chikaming Township, said that a Cherry Beach Ambassador Advisory Committee, which consists of members Sue Phelan, Brian Kern and Carolyn Drier, are in agreement that a kiosk fee structure should be recommended for Cherry Beach to the board.

The kiosk system would come with a Verizon booster, which will increase the signal for fire and safety as well as beachgoers.

"We're excited about this opportunity and what it presents itself in controlling the overcrowding and some of the mayhem that occurred last year at Cherry Beach," Martin said.

Dead trees have also been cleared on the township's acquired land next to Cherry Beach's parking area, with only dead trees being removed. Because of the Berrien County Road Department's right of way access, the township isn't allowed to charge for parking along that right of way, which goes all the way to the bluff.

Martin said that, in his opinion, the best solution would be to take a portion of the acquired land that's not impeding on the critical dune and create some additional spots that will give them some "flexibility" on the parking that the township would lose from the right of way. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) was slated to come this week to walk the land with Martin to determine what can and can't be done with the critical dune and acquired land in terms of parking. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which has also been involved due to the land being acquired through grants and donations, has also approved a fee structure.

Martin said it's being recommended that there be a Chikaming Township resident/taxpayer seasonal option as well as a daily flat fee.

Local taxpayers would know they can acquire a seasonal pass by coming to the township office "if the communication is accurate and proper," Martin said.

He's most concerned about getting the word out about the daily fee.

"That's where the communication really has to get out and be blanketed via social, via every channel that's available," Martin said.

The kiosk, which would be in a central location, would be a plate reader. After a license plate number is punched in, the kiosk would spit out a receipt to be placed in a windshield. The seasonal pass for residents would need to be affixed to a windshield "so it's not transferable," Martin said.

It's been discussed that the kiosk system will be enforced every day from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Chikaming Township Supervisor David Bunte said that the proposed changes are a good "start."

"I'm hopeful you do a review next month as to where things stand with the decision making from DNR and also from EGLE and if there's a new layout and plan on any additional parking so we can get an update on where the process is," he said to Martin.

Martin said that, in his opinion, the best solution would be to take a portion of the acquired land that's not impeding on the critical dune and create some additional spots that will give them some "flexibility" on the parking that the township would lose from the right of way. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) was slated to come this week to walk the land with Martin to determine what can and can't be done with the critical dune and acquired land in terms of parking. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which has also been involved due to the land being acquired through grants and donations, has also approved a fee structure.

Chikaming Township Police Chief Todd Taylor said two reserve officer candidates, Brian Burkhard and Alicia Messer, are currently in the police department training academy and slated to graduate in May.

Messer will help with beach patrol this summer along with parking enforcement.

Board members approved committing $8,750, which is 50% of the Pier Street Citizens Group's request for funding for the Pier Street Beach viewing platform project's studies, survey and initial drawings.

The initial amount will allow the commencement of studies, which would include an environmental and soil bearing study, needed to perform the project. The group will come back to reinforce the additional $8,750 needed at the March meeting and to give an update on the project.

Re'Linn Hansen said that the group, which is composed of concerned residents who live in and around Lakeside, would like to make Pier Street Beach a "destination" for visitors of the township and beyond.

She said that the beach erodes very easily and for the past few years, there's been no beach there. Now, there's 20 feet of beach in front of it, although it "will continue to be a "vulnerable beach."

"We have planned for studies to confirm the beach is vulnerable because of a geographic point that goes out prior to Pier Street Beach and also because of a revetment there - possibly that's what's eroding the beach," Hansen said, adding that an environmental study would show that as well.

The plan is to review the beach's outlook, dismantle it and put in a larger one, along with possibly some platforms and stairs going down to the beach. The stairs would also be replaced. "The community would feel comfortable going there and sitting there and enjoying that beach whether or not there's sand at the bottom or not," Hansen said.

Board members approved the township collecting 100% of summer taxes from River Valley, Lake Michigan College and Berrien RESA and 50% from New Buffalo.

Board members approved Zacory Wainscott as a part time/MFR fire department new hire.

Board members approved extending another three-year term for Tom Gold on the Zoning Board of Appeals and to extend another three-year term for Cam Mammina and for John Chipman on the Planning Commission and Chris Brooks on the Construction Board of Appeals.

The salaries for the supervisor, clerk, treasurer and trustees for the 2024-2025 fiscal year beginning April 1 were approved.

Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, board members approved engaging McKenna as the consulting firm for a rewrite of the township's master plan.

Due to technology issues, board members tabled a Zoom discussion with AEP representatives on the New Buffalo-Bridgman Transmission Line Rebuild Project until next month.

SCHOLASTICS

Name, color choice revealed for high school sports cooperative

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Students at New Buffalo Area Schools and River Valley Schools have chosen the Red Arrow Raiders as the official name with regards to the two school districts' high school sports cooperative.

Also decided on was Carolina blue and white, with graphite and black as the official colors.

School board members from both districts heard about the student driven decision –making process, which was decided on by the Collaborative Oversight Program Committee (CPOC).

at the beginning of the New Buffalo Area Schools' Board of Education' Monday, Feb. 12,

The process involved student leadership groups from each school meeting two to three times with their respective athletic directors to discuss possible names, mascots and colors. The groups then met together to discuss the lists and narrowed down the choices The CPOC decided that students in grades six through 12 would be sent a google form to vote on the options, where they ranked their choices for name and had a straight vote for color options.

The survey garnered 256 responses, with 60% of students ranking Red Arrow Raiders as their first choice.

River Valley Schools Athletic Director Colby Caid said that, after discussing it with the CPOC, as a result of the color vote being almost a "split vote" and that white will be used as a home/away jersey color, it was decided to combine the two color palates to honor Carolina blue (and white) as the winner while also giving options for jersey colors using black and graphite as needed.

With regards to the mascot, Caid said it would be whatever they envision a "Raider to be, which is likely a pirate." The current symbol is a flag with a Raider symbol.

With regards to the upcoming baseball season, Caid said that, where both districts' varsity teams sit right now, there are too many students for varsity and not enough for junior varsity and that both coaches are ready to merge, which would consist of half of New Buffalo's young students and half of River Valley's.

Numbers are still tentative with regards to the season. Caid said to members of both boards that they were putting it on their "radar" they might approach them to consider the merger, pending numbers and that a coach is found.

The merger would differ from the high school sport merger schedule that was approved by both boards last fall.

"If the numbers come back that we both have a JV, we're perfectly fine. If the numbers come back and we only have enough for two varsities, that's what it is," he said

If the districts are "somewhere in the middle," Caid said that they'd ask if they could take the "young freshmen and underdeveloped sophomores and put them together to make one team so those kids are involved, they're playing, they're not trying to fall out of the program."

New Buffalo Area Schools Board of Education President Lisa Werner also asked the committee to take a look at the approved timeline with regards to the districts merging sports and return to the boards with ideas or suggestions.

New Buffalo board members heard an update on the strategic planning process.

Tim Wyrosdick, a coach/consultant at Studor Education, said they've been talking with stakeholders and gaining input as well as looking at organizational "wide, long term goals that we can really make sure that we bring efficacy and capacity to." These organizational successes will be defined as well as what this success "looks like five years from now in a very strategic plan."

Wyrosdick said to board members that the process also involves creating an accountability tool, which will give them the opportunity to see "if we're actually doing what we said we would do as a district."

The process involves three phases: an environmental scan, which involves gathering data on the district's current state through surveys and a steering committees and focus groups; analysis, during which a draft will be prepared on a potential strategic plan, with information being sent in a survey form to stakeholders that were involved in the focus groups for input and that information being brought back to the steering committee and then the school board for final approval and the action plan, which is continuing to engage in the community and shareholders to hold the district accountable.

"The strategic plan is a five year focus, it provides key strategies of how we're going to achieve that excellence and it provides input from everyone - not just once, not just twice, for five years," Wyrosdick said.

Wyrosdick did another parent focus group that night and will be returning in March to engage with employees and students.

"Our goal will be to include as many contributors as possible - we want to hear from every voice, we want to include every voice in our work to develop big pillars, big goals and every target action that would change our work," he said.

The tentative timeline calls for a final draft by June or July.

Board members adopted the National School Lunch Week Proclamation for March 4-8.

New Buffalo Area Schools Superintendent Adam Bowen said that that week would be when elementary school students would begin eating in the gym because of the kitchen/cafeteria expansion and that Patty Iazzetto, food services director, would be preparing meals at the high school.

Greg Vosberg, a member of the building and grounds committee, said that the project is behind schedule; however, it's still slated to be completed by Labor Day and they'll continue to revisit the schedule.

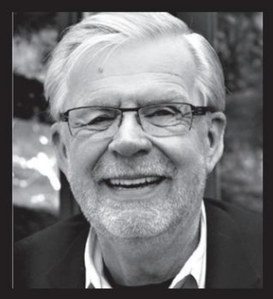
Board members approved the revised board Policy 3213A - Tuition Income.

Board members accepted a bid from Moss in the amount of $845,594.46 for district technology and security upgrades. Bowen said this in regards to the districtwide electronic key project and that they'd begin work on the outbuildings, such as the STEAM building and field house.

SPORTS

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO



Sunday was not a typical day. There was a football game that actually lived up to the hype.

I was informed that it's okay for me to say Super Bowl. In the past, I thought no one could use the term Super Bowl but I was informed you could use it if you weren't using it for advertising or marketing.

I watched the game from the comfort of my home for the first time that I can remember. I was able to watch all the commercials, hear every word of the play by play description of the game, enjoy the half time show, and eat delicious food prepared for me by my gal. To top it all off, the game was really hotly contested and exciting, with the Chiefs, the team I was rooting for, emerging victorious in overtime.

After watching Patrick Mahomes dismantle the 49ers defense, I had a change of heart about what I want the Bears to do with their number one draft choice this year.

I was on the fence about keeping the choice and drafting Caleb Williams, the quarterback from Southern Cal who some experts say could be the next Mahomes, or trading the pick so that the Bears could be built into a powerhouse with the still unproven Justin Fields at quarterback. Either way could work or not work, but I now want to take the chance to acquire a player that could possibly be extraordinary, like Mahomes, to lead the Bears. I hope Fields ends up being great too, but for another team.

There were many good commercials, but my favorites were for Dunkin' Donuts and for Dove soap. I enjoyed the commercial with Christopher Walken, but I don't remember what he was selling. Also, after seeing the ad for Microsoft's co-pilot, I grabbed my phone to check it out.

The half time show was very entertaining. I'm aware that the world is very tuned in to Usher's music (he's the 71st most listened to artist on Spotify) but I'm not familiar with it, so the Super Bowl got him at least one new fan.

I had Italian Beef sandwiches and Fondue to eat on Sunday, a couple of my favorites, with a delicious homemade cupcake for dessert. Really, the only thing that could have made the game better, is if the Lions, or even better, the Bears, were participants.

Finally, I must share my thoughts about Taylor Swift. Her love affair with Travis Kelce has been a breath of fresh air. It's hard for me to believe that anyone could hate this story. There are plenty of things to be upset about in our world, but to get your undies in a bundle because a young lady is getting attention during a football game seems so wrong.

Pitchers and catchers report this week and before you know it, the opening game of the baseball season will be here. Yay!!

A sign that was hanging in the locker room of my high school more than fifty years ago went like this: "Luck is what comes when preparation meets opportunity."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

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This newspaper supports your right to know.

Surging Bison seem for real in narrow losses

BY STAN MADDUX

Despite two straight losses, the New Buffalo High School boys' basketball team continued to impress in games decided by razor thin margins against opponents that defeated them handily earlier in the season.

The Bison lost 47-44 against Howardsville Christian at home Thursday, Feb. 8, and 54-53 at Our Lady of the Lake Feb. 6.

Head coach Nate Tripp said his team up by four points with 20 seconds left in the game lost against Our Lady of the Lake because of a couple of breakdowns.

He said the game against Howardsville Christian boiled down to missing too many open shots, especially late in the game.

"I'm disappointed but I'm not upset with our guys. Our guys are battling," he said.

In comparison, Howardsville Christian defeated the Bison at home by 30 points Dec. 15.

The Bison lost to Our Lady of the Lake at home Dec. 12 by nine points.

The two most recent losses dropped the once 1-6 Bison to 9-9 on the season.

Helping the Bison compete against the size advantage of Howardsville Christian was 5'7" junior M'Nason Smothers.

He paired up close to the rim with 6'3" center sophomore Lucas Forker on offense and defense throughout the game.

Smothers used his tremendous leaping ability to be effective in grabbing rebounds.

He also scored most of his 11 points on lay ups and short jump shots over the outreached hands of much taller defenders.

Tripp said Smothers would be the team's center if not for the ability of Forker to use his height and other physical abilities to dominate at times on both sides of the court.

"If not for Lucas, M'Nason would be our guy. He can play any spot from point guard to the big man," he said.

The Bison seemed to be wavering late in the second quarter but went into halftime trailing by five points when Sam Tripp nailed a three point shot at the buzzer.

The third quarter began with New Buffalo quickly tying the game and later opening a four point lead.

During the scoring streak, Smothers, while driving the baseline, was underneath the backboard and then switched the ball to his other hand in mid-air to lay it off the glass and into the rim.

Andres Becera quickly drained a three point shot and then later hit another one after a free throw by Smothers.

Both teams kept exchanging leads into the fourth quarter until Howardsville Christian went up by three points with two minutes left on the game clock.

New Buffalo could have forced overtime but missed an open three point shot in the final seconds.

Becera, Tripp and Forker each contributed eight points while James Shaw added seven points.

Tripp said the losses against very good opponents will help prepare his players for the upcoming post season.

"They're like playoff games. It's getting us ready for districts," he said.

My ultimate goal is to end up being happy. Most of the time. — *Taylor Swift*

La Lumiere peaking with possible bid to national tourney on the horizon

BY STAN MADDUX

The college prep boys basketball team from La Lumiere made it look almost easy in defeating a talented squad from Chicago at home Tuesday, Feb. 13.

The Lakers, ranked No. 6 in the nation, defeated Chicago Prep Sports Academy 95-51.

CPSA kept the game close until the Lakers began pulling away very late in the first quarter on quick buckets from 6'4" Melvin Bell, Jr. after he grabbed an offensive rebound and 6'5" Darius Adams, who nailed a three point shot.

Head coach Pat Holmes said the scrappy play of their opponents posed some challenges early on.

"Our guys adjusted. It took us about four or five minutes to kind of figure it out and then after that we were pretty good," he said.

The second quarter for La Lumiere started with 7'0" Steve Solano catching an inbounds pass and going up for a thunderous slam dunk.

However, the 12 point lead for the Lakers was soon cut to seven points.

The Lakers then scored 17 of the next 19 points with help from several buckets by 6'4" Jerry Easter, II.

The run was capped with back to back slam dunks from Bell and 6'7" Jalen Haralson.

The lead grew to 23 points after Solano converted a pass into another slam dunk at the halftime buzzer.

Any chance for a comeback seemed over when the Lakers outscored the opposition by seven points halfway through the third quarter.

The final nails in the coffin were hammered from Adams sinking a three point shot followed quickly by Haralson doing so from well beyond the three point line.

Easter led the Lakers with 20 points.

Chuck Love, III had 17 points followed by Solano with 14 points.

Bell and Adams scored 12 and 11 points respectively.

Holmes said it was nice to see the development in his players after the same opponent in a previous game this season pulled to within nine points after trailing by 25 points in the second half.

"To keep on building on a lead, it was great for our group to see that maturity," he said.

Holmes expects his team to receive another invitation to the national finals in March by winning the remaining of what are mostly home games on their regular season schedule.

Before the season began, Holmes said he saw championship potential in this team, which had seven new players on the roster from last year.

"Where we were in October, where we are now is night and day but there's still room for growth, which is exciting," he said.

A very heartfelt Open Mic Night

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Valentine's Day was celebrated a few days early during a special Open Mic Night that was hosted by Kelly Hoppenjans at The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts in Three Oaks Friday, Feb. 9.

Artists from the surrounding area and beyond serenaded the audience with an array of romantic themed songs (along with some anti-Valentine's Day-themed songs). Artists sang a variety of well-known love songs, such as Van Morrison's "Moondance" and Pat Benatar's "We Belong," with some originals thrown into the mix. Hoppenjans, an indie-rock singer-songwriter who's been a finalist for The Acorn's singer-songwriter competition, closed out the show with her guitar rendition of "I'm a Believer," along with some of the night's artists.

Open Mic Nights are free admission and held at The Acorn once a month, with the next one scheduled for Thursday, March 14, with Jack Whittle, a Chicagoland-based blues and roots singer, guitarist and songwriter. For future inquiries, contact openmic@acornlive.org.

Kelly Hoppenjans takes the stage with Dirty Sally, aka Acorn artistic director Nikki Gauthier

The Parker and Shannon duo take the stage

Hannah Baird takes the stage

Kelly Hoppenjans opens the show

Linda Weseman performs an anti-Valentine's song

Brian Kanyer performs a love song on the Turner Stage

Mild David jams to an original love song on his guitar

Mr. Reese performs an original love song

Dirty Sally, aka Acorn artistic director Nikki Gauthier, sings along to We Belong Together

Zeno performs Tonight on his guitar

Jane Ledguard, one half of Two Girls in a Hat, performs Moondance

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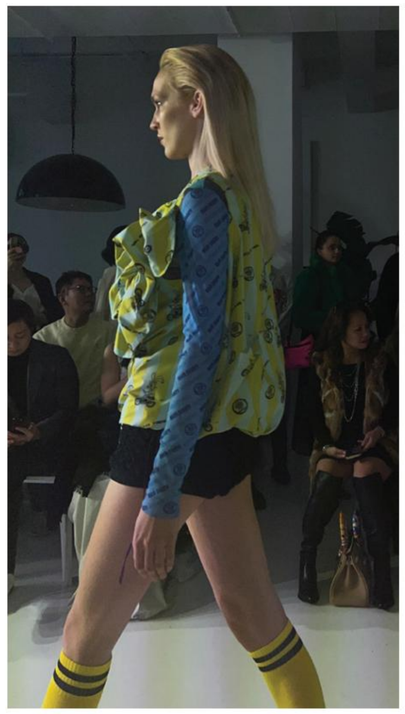
Kiyoka Hase's theme NON-FICTION explores the blurring lines between reality and imagination through fashion

RE RHEE is a designer brand known for its harmonious blend of luxury and contemporary trends

A Naito Oikawa design. His work explores the internal struggle between ambition and seeking validation, particularly from a father figure

A Miari Shigeta design



Kiyoka Hase NON-FICTION blurs the lines between reality and imagination. Journey with her to post-apocalyptic worlds woven into clothing

Yaxin Zone's FW24 collection, TRANSFORMATION, explores self-discovery through dance, using motifs of the swan's metamorphosis from white to black

Emerging Asian designers captivate with visions at NYFW

BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Five emerging brands and six designers from Asia took center stage at New York Fashion Week (NYFW) on Saturday, February 10, 2024, showcasing their future-focused visions. This year's show, part of the global incubation project Asia Fashion Collection (AFC), delivered, fostering fresh talent across the continent.

The spotlight shone on a futuristic utopia, with three exciting Japanese brands and artists: KIYOKA HASE by Kiyoka Hase, MIARI SHIGETA by Miari Shigeta, and Sun Below by Naito Oikawa. Their designs transported the audience to a world of innovation and possibility.

Forget boring realities! Kiyoka Hase twists them into fashion, blurring real and imagined in every stitch. Miari Shigeta's "CYCLING TRAIL" lets active women shift gears into freedom, escape, and self-love. And Naito Oikawa throws punches in his designs, exploring dreams, approval, and finding your inner champion.

South Korea's RE RHEE, led by June Bok Rhee and Hyun Jung Joo, brought their signature style to the catwalk, captivating with bold pieces and statement looks. Taiwan's YAXIN ZONE, designed by Yahsin Chung, offered a contrasting vision of ethereal beauty and delicate details.

Held at the Daylight Studio in the heart of New York City's Flatiron district, the show pulsed with vibrant energy, reflecting the diverse talent of the participants.

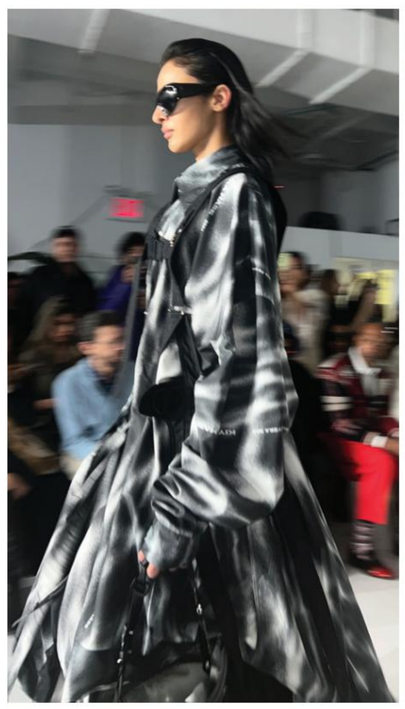
Created by Vantan and PARCO, AFC empowers young designers from across Asia to showcase their talent at NYFW. Each season, emerging brands compete in Tokyo, with winners presenting their menswear and womenswear collections on the prestigious NYFW runway.

The Fall/Winter 2024 collection featured captivating designs from various Asian countries, reflecting AFC's commitment to fostering new talent and expanding the reach of Asian fashion within the global industry. Judges, including WWD JAPAN Editor-in-Chief Kaname Murakami, play a crucial role in selecting the most promising designers.

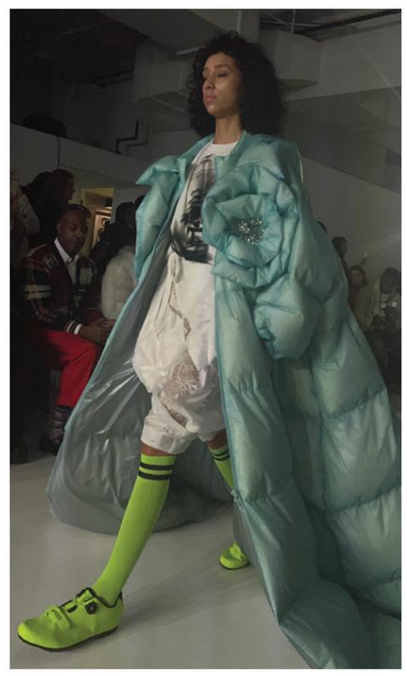
Yaxin Zone

The desire for personal space and escape from crowded trains post-pandemic. Miari Shigeta

A look from Japanese designer Miari Shigeta



Kiyoka Hase



Art by Miari Shigeta on the catwalk

Bold colors, leather, lace, and sequins for RE RHEE

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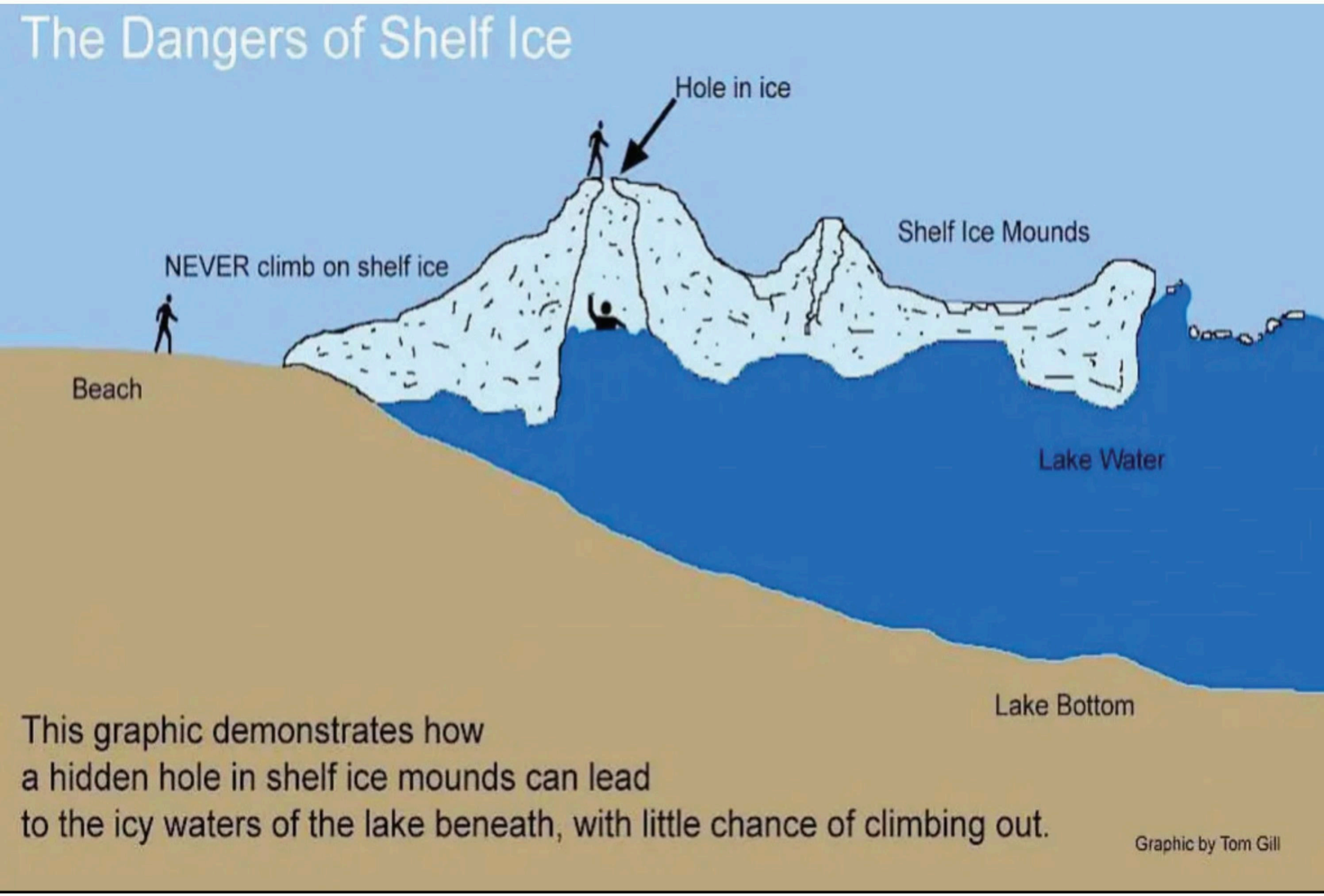

The Dangers of Shelf Ice
Hole in ice
Shelf Ice Mounds
NEVER climb on shelf ice
Beach
Lake Water
Lake Bottom
This graphic demonstrates how
a hidden hole in shelf ice mounds can lead
to the icy waters of the lake beneath, with little chance of climbing out.
Graphic by Tom Gill

Fatal crash on U.S. 20

BY STAN MADDUX

One person was killed in a single vehicle crash Monday, Feb. 12, in LaPorte County.

The victim was identified as Kendra Murphy, 33, of South Bend.

La Porte County Police said Murphy was a front-seat passenger in a vehicle operated by Lashea Bird, 40, also of South Bend.

For unknown reasons, police said the westbound vehicle veered to the right and began traveling off the north side of U.S. 20.

The vehicle continued on until striking a tree at Wilhelm Road.

Police said Murphy was pronounced dead at the scene while Bird was taken by medical helicopter to a regional hospital with an upper-body injury.

Investigators were waiting for the results of a standard blood test to determine if alcohol or drugs were a factor in the crash.

Westbound traffic was backed up several miles until travel restrictions imposed because of the accident were lifted.

HIKERS TO EXPLORE RARE FLATWOODS ON FEBRUARY OUTING IN NEW BUFFALO

The Harbor Country Hikers will visit one of West Michigan's rare moist acidic sandy flatwoods during its frozen winter period in a hike scheduled for 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24, at New Buffalo Area Schools' Nature Study Trails.

"These forests can be underwater or bone dry, it just depends on when you visit them," Pat Fisher, hike leader and president of the Hikers, said. "Unfortunately, they are endangered because they often fall outside the protection of Michigan's wetland laws."

Those who attend are advised to dress in layers, wear a warm cap and sturdy shoes or boots, and bring plenty of water. Depending on the weather, there may be some muddy or icy areas. This is a makeup hike for one originally scheduled for Jan. 20, but called off on account of weather. For more details, including driving directions, visit www.harborcountryhikers.com or the Hikers' Facebook page.

— STAFF REPORTS

New Buffalo Times
LOCAL INTELLIGENCE
— SINCE 1942 —

A Day in the Life

THOUGHTS ABOUT MY PASSING

BY LAWRENCE VON EBELER

Now isn't that an appealing title?

It's not something any of us would choose to address, especially when it becomes something you have to do. I am not foreseeing any difficulties with my health; however, I am a little old to think I can live for much longer (as much as I wish that I could).

I have family and friends to consider for many things. Some are already involved with my current status. I have a counselor, good friends, a doting brother and sister and two nieces, who stand ready to serve.

One of the most challenging issues that most people, such as I, have is: What do you do about all of your possessions?

Like most people attempting to be fair with the interested parties, they have picked a few things already. The bigger issue, though, is what to do with those things that no one would probably want anything to do with. Being a borderline compulsive possessive freak, who could almost qualify as a hoarder, there are so many "things" that I think are terrific but have no value as far as putting a price on them - or even, to most sane people, as a collectable item.

I am thrilled with my new chandelier over the dining table. Never mind it was only $15 in a second-hand shop. I have a collection of tableware that goes on for days: China, flatware and stemware. Pots and pans are another huge collection that should be snapped up by any learned chef or cook. Then there are the framed photographs, which number in the hundreds, of family and friends. There are the photos of my projects that have been taken over the years; however, there's actually someone who wants them to be put together for an exhibit in Paris. Then there's the hand painted furniture that was created by me, and there's the collection of "Objects d' Art" that takes up a major portion of the various collections. (Who would want my Artic birds in an octagonal glass show case?) I feel the same about my wedding pictures that were taken by a famous photographer friend of ours, who did Frank Sinatra albums and other stars' album covers, that I still display proudly after several decades. There are hundreds of framed photos of all of my family and friends. What should I do with those? Should I throw them out?

As far as the furniture is concerned, there are several pieces, besides the hand painted chest of drawers that I painted in Zebra stripes, of which I'm fond. Who do you know wants a Zebra striped chest of drawers, though? The dining chairs, which I had in storage for 30 years, are aluminum and were designed for the Navy in 1942 and are quite valuable today. I have Chotkas for days on bookshelves. The shelves, which cover an entire long wall, are filled to the gills with just things I like to have around. I doubt if anyone is interested in the furnishings for the bar, which are heavy tumblers, stemware, ice buckets, tools, artwork of note and psychedelic lighting that flashes from a church sale. There are several sets of good flatware by designers. Outstanding oriental and designer area rugs. Six Lucite dining chairs. Two king size mechanical beds. The photos of autos I have owned: three Jaguars, two Corvettes, etc. Then there're the photos of the dogs. I loved them and took great care of them; they were people to me. I had services for them when they passed. There're hundreds of photos of my Lhasa Apsos, which I had eight of over the years, along with some hand painted ones.

I'm almost forgetting about the photos of my Baptism. Six strapping boys had to push me down a sand dune on a dune buggy at Warren Dunes State Park to the water's edge for the event. In my full-length white robe and a Safari hat, I felt like Cleopatra arriving in her fabulous barge.

I do have a detailed written plan for the service. It's a real "Celebration of Life" - my way, and with the blessing of God. Stay tuned and don't miss it!

I think I'll go have a diet Pepsi and Ruffles potato chips, with cheddar cheese - my current compulsive eating favorite! (I wish I had some York mint patties too.)

HOROSCOPE

FEBRUARY 15-21, 2024

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

This week will offer much in the social complexities department. Best to approach situations with an open mind and a willingness to try new things. Avoid making judgements until later when you have had time to piece everything together. Until then, enjoy the show.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

This is the time to take the lead. You are responsible for setting the tone of the situation, now. Whether it is at work, at home or interpersonal relationships, set clear boundaries with people. Be clear about what you will and won't tolerate from the start and there won't be drama later.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

This is the time to start your wanderings and encountering new and exciting opportunities. Don't let yourself get bogged down in routines or held back by the interpretations of life that are not your own. Shake off the dust and get your gear together. The road and trails are calling.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

It is important to root your intimate, committed relationships in integrity and kindness. Hidden agendas and power plays will only lead to unnecessary drama and an ultimate collapse of the union. If you want a truly productive and happy arrangement, set it on the right course from the start.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

There will be a lot happening in the relationship department. Prepare yourself for some interesting encounters and unusual entertainment. This is the time to find something different to get excited about. Break out of conventional ideas about how to maintain enthusiasm within a partnership.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

There is a very communal and socially complex vibe settling in this week, that will expand your understanding of tradition. Outsiders may provide you with the excitement and drama necessary to change your perspective on the unknown and embrace a new outlook on life and its interconnectedness.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

Sit back and quietly observe the situation this week. Pay attention to details as there will be a subtle theatrical display of power this week. Most people will miss the indirect meanings and perspectives this interaction offers. You on the other hand, will learn much about the players.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

This week it is important to make your home more peaceful and tranquil. Perhaps, it's time to remove broken items that no longer provide safe service. Make decisions that are from a more utilitarian standpoint and get rid of things that are draining your time, energy and money.

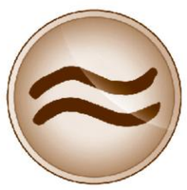
SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

Deal with those hard topics, this week. Get issues and ideas on the table, no matter how controversial or disheartening the information is. Not being authentic always makes you look bad sooner or later. So, why not get the bad news out there first? Get the healing started.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

Your protective side will be sparked this week and you could find yourself in the middle of something you didn't plan on getting involved in. Be aware that the power discrepancy you are seeing displayed, may not be all there is to the story. The juicy details are sure to come out, at a later date.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



This week the old quote from, As You Like It, "All the world is a stage, and all the men and women are merely players. They have their exits and entrances; and one man plays many parts" will be huge. Pay attention to cues and put forth more meaning and presence, then exit with piquancy.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

Pay special attention to dreams and intuitive feelings this week, as they will be amped up and full of wisdom. Take time to write down your feelings in the morning and look for repetitive themes to show up throughout your day. Use this intersection of the mental and physical as confirmation of the Divine.

Much effort, much prosperity. — *Euripides*

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

		9				7		6
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1			3					
		8		1				7
		7				3		5
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9		3		4				

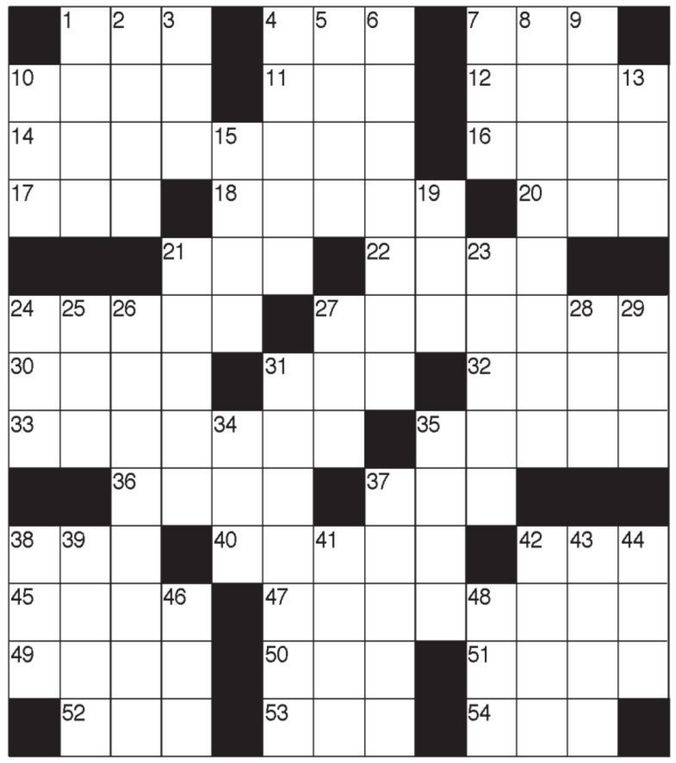
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Hemp shrub
4 Opening
7 Female sheep
10 Fr. soprano
11 Compass direction
12 Bean
14 Addendum
16 Rosebud, e.g.
17 Burmese knife
18 Hindu prayer position
20 Pair
21 Tosspot
22 Russ. inland sea
24 Ancient fish
27 Balm
30 Cork helmet
31 Cathode-ray tube (abbr.)
32 King of Israel
33 One of the Seven Hills of Rome
35 Desolate
36 End
37 Bullring cheer
38 N.Z. woody vine
40 Mother-of-pearl
42 Braz. tree
45 Ceylonese langur
47 Cuke
49 Son of Judah
50 Father: Arabic
51 Ancient Per. province
52 Air traffic control (abbr.)
53 Article (Fr.)
54 Part of a course

DOWN

1 Scientific name (suf.)
2 Annul
3 Async-Sync Interface (abbr.)
4 Spirit (Ger.)
5 Forest ox
6 Banner
7 Loop trains
8 Colima (2 words)
9 Flightless bird
10 Block
13 Stir
15 New Mexico art colony
19 Amer. Red Cross (abbr.)
21 Pile
23 Mush
24 Et cetera (abbr.)
25 Haitian voodoo deity
26 Gibus (2 words)
27 Container
28 ___ pro nobis
29 One who is (suf.)
31 Pers. lynx
34 John, Gaelic
35 Blue (Fr.)
37 Hades
38 Love (Lat.)
39 Jap. writing system
41 Caribbean island
42 Qualified
43 Wampum
44 Fortify
46 Ancient (abbr.)
48 Honey



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NO BULLYING SCHOOLS PRESENTATION

- ***Where: New Buffalo Middle/High School Cafeteria***
- ***When: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m. Following the NBAS Empty Bowls event.***
- ***Tom Thelen (more info below)***

WHO IS TOM THELEN??

- ***Speaker at 800+ schools since 2012***
- ***Lead Author of Mental Health 101***
- ***Founder of Nonprofit, Reset Schools***
- ***Certified Trainer in "Mental Health First Aid," a program from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing***
- ***Lives in Cocoa, Florida, with his wife Casie, four kids, and a dog.***

Tom Thelen is one of America's top motivational speakers on the topics of mental health and bullying prevention. His new book, Mental Health 101 for Teens, is an Amazon #1 Release.

Tom has spoken at over 800 schools and conferences and has been interviewed on NBC, CBS, FOX, and PBS. Tom is a Certified Instructor in Youth Mental Health First Aid, a training program by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

As the founder of the nonprofit RESETSCHOOLS.ORG Tom and his team created the award-winning Mental Health 101 Book and Curriculum, a program that teaches students positive skills like respect, responsibility, and resiliency, as well as coping skills for stress and anxiety.

Tom is the founder of NOBULLYINGSCHOOLS.COM an evidence-based bullying prevention program with a smartphone app and video lessons on the topics of bullying, mental health, social skills, and resiliency.

Tom graduated from Grace University with a Bachelor of Science degree and went on to write three books for students including Teen Leadership Revolution, Victimproof, and Mental Health 101 for Teens.

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Young 'Mighty Acorns' take on the great outdoors

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

What looked like a game of "Capture the Bean Bag" to an onlooker who might be wandering through the field in the back of New Buffalo Elementary School Friday, Feb. 9, was a lesson for students on the importance of the predator-prey relationship in nature.

Students acted the role of either fox squirrel or gray squirrel and tried to gather one bean bag, or "acorn," each and run to the "end zone." Meanwhile, two students played the role of coyote, trying to tag the squirrels and acquire their acorns.

There were a few caveats: Squirrels could only spend three seconds in the "safe zone," or colored hula hoops set up in the center of the playing field, and had to stay away from the cones outlining the playing field.

Grace Fredenburg, education and outreach coordinator at Chikaming Open Lands (COL), said in the wild, the orangish red fox squirrel would have a harder time escaping the coyotes than the gray ones because they couldn't blend into the mostly grayish winter environment.

The game introduces students to coyotes, which aren't spotted as often as squirrels.

"It teaches about the importance of coyotes because coyotes tend to get a pretty bad rep," Fredenburg said.

The activity was a part of the Mighty Acorns program, which has started up again at the elementary school.

Fredenburg said the program comes from the Chicago Field Museum, where it was designed with educators and scientists to meet nationwide science curriculum for third through fifth graders.

With New Buffalo Area Schools, it comes with a curriculum that can be taught in the classroom and during a field trip, which is where COL comes in.

Students troop out to the area behind the school, which includes the COL preserve, Turtle Creek Nature Preserve, as well as the schools' Nature Study Trails.

Three different rotations occur among three groups of students. Students rotate between playing an educational game, doing free exploration in the Nature Study Trails and performing stewardship in the preserve.

Armed with backpacks full of supplies such as microscopes, small nets and field guides, students discover a whole world underneath a log when they lift in it up while on the trails: A world where red-backed salamanders, newts, millipedes and garter snakes roam..

Pat Fisher, who's president of Harbor Country Hikers and led the free exploration portion, said the creatures might be moving around more on that spring-like February day as opposed to a few weeks ago.

"When you found them a few weeks ago, you'd think they were dead, they'd sit there really still and stiff - and today, you may find them the same way," he said, adding students should put the log back on after exploring to ensure the creatures stayed warm.

Over in the preserve, students were removing two invasive species: the honeysuckle and the multiflora rose.

Dan Engel, stewardship manager at COL, said that the species crowd out native plants and produce fruits that aren't for food for birds and wildlife.

"Pretend you're a bird and you need to walk or fly all the way to Florida, unhealthy berries aren't going to help you very much - you need those native plants that this one crowds out," Engel said of the honeysuckle.

Last fall, students had helped Engel collect seed out of the prairie.

Fredenburg said the Rotary Club of Harbor Country helps offset some of the cost for the supplies. Members purchase the backpacks for the students and the supplies inside of them and also supply the volunteers that keep the program going.

Fredenburg said she has a passion for introducing the students to the great outdoors that's right in their own backyard.

"It's a way to get students outside of the classroom during the daytime but more importantly, it takes outside and it takes nature and it brings it down to a level that students can understand," she said.

Particularly during free exploration, students are also removed from their "comfort zone."

"You're able to push that comfort zone a little bit and get to know things that maybe you'd want to get to know on your own, at your own pace," Fredenburg added.

Some parents accompany students on their field trip to the preserve, trails and field.

"The parents are seeing what's happening with the program and as with Turtle Creek Preserve, it's open all the time, so parents and students can come back and they can explore on their own time and really continue engaging with the environment," she said.

Kaylee Behena checks out the salamander that she collected

Students search for invasive species in the preserve

Students learn about predators and prey in a lively game

Molly Novacek uses her microscope to view the trail

Students check out the ecosystems underneath a log

Pat Fisher explains hibernation to students

Dan Engel shows students an invasive species, the Honeysuckle

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